

REMARKS/ARGUMENT

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2-8 and 11-13 have been rewritten in independent form and Claims 9 and 10 have been amended to depend from Claims 5 and 6, respectively. Appropriate amendments have been included to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 14 and 26 have also been amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 2-13, 14, and 26, as amended are slightly broader in scope than original Claims 1-13, 14 and 26, respectively; however, no new matter has been introduced and the scope of the amended claims is fully supported by the specification and the original claims. The remaining claims have also been amended for clarity and to remove the basis for any rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Miyashita et al., (U.S. Patent 6,167,583). Claim 1 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yonemizu et al., (U.S. Patent 5,858,112) in combination with Kubota et al., (U.S. Patent 6,059,891).

The rejections are now moot in view of the cancellation of Claim 1.

In view of the above amendments and discussion, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

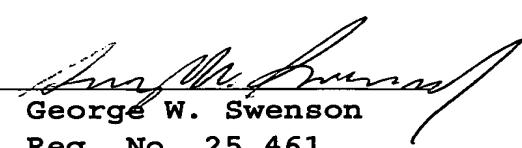
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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